



## Retail Food

With a reduction of staff and resources, there will be a decline in the number of Retail Food inspections that are conducted daily. Statistics have shown that a reduction in the number of professional level, risk-based retail food inspections will result in an increase of food borne illnesses. Subsequently, this will result in an increase in medical costs, lost wages and deaths associated with food borne illnesses for Louisiana's residents and visitors. Due to a growing number of imports, our SAFE food supply is growing more vulnerable every day. The many food borne illness outbreaks and recalls (ex. Peanuts and Salmonella) make it ever more important for our licensed sanitarians to be available to inspect, regulate and assist Louisiana's Retail Establishments with providing the delicious and safe food supply that we have all grown to love.

### **Objective**

Provide the regulation, education and assistance required to assure a safe food supply for Louisiana's residents and visitors.

### **Narrative**

The Retail Food Program provides the service of conducting plans review, permitting and regulating for retail food establishments. These procedures are conducted to ensure safe food supplies throughout the state of Louisiana for both our residents and visitors. There are over twenty-eight thousand (28,000) retail food establishments currently permitted in Louisiana. Retail Food establishments include but are not limited to Restaurants, Grocery Stores, Bars, Mobile Unit food services, bakeries, meat markets, seafood markets and deli's. Retail Food establishments also include food services operating within nursing homes, daycare centers, residential/assisted living facilities, jails, hospital and hotels. The following actions are required by law and are performed by sanitarians throughout the state: Provide Plans Review of Retail Food Establishments, this ensures that the establishment has the basic equipment and facilities needed to provide safe food - Conduct Pre-opening inspections of Retail Food Establishments to ensure that all equipment (example: refrigeration units or hot hold buffet tables) are functioning properly - Permitting of Retail Food Establishments, allows sanitarians to properly

track and schedule inspections of Retail Food Establishments. -Compliance Order issuance for Retail Food establishments ensures that establishments with health hazards will come into compliance and refrain from serving unsafe food products - Perform Routine, Re-inspections and Complaint inspections of Retail Food Establishments, these inspections are designed to assist facilities on maintaining compliance as well as correct critical violations - Seizure and destructions of unsafe and/or recalled food products - Inspections of retail food establishments are conducted to secure safe food supplies following a disaster or emergency.

<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/?ID=216>

### **Better Health**

- The Retail Food Program provides plans review, permitting, educational and regulatory services for over 28,000 retail food facilities throughout Louisiana. Over 64,000 inspections are conducted in Louisiana's retail facilities per year.
- Safe food supplies are provided for Louisiana residents and visitors.
- Food is a major component in Louisiana's tourism industry. Safe food supplies protect the health and wellbeing of Louisiana's residents and visitors as well as provide a healthy economy drawn from our safe and largely desired food supply.
- The Retail Food Program works in Collaboration with the Louisiana Restaurant Association, Louisiana Retailers Association, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, United States Public Health Services, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Social Services, Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs, Department of Education – Nutrition Services, Department of Agriculture, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana State University, National Environmental Health Association, Conference For Food Protection, Parish and Municipal Governmental entities, Louisiana Public Health Association, Louisiana Food Safety Network, Steton Technology. Louisiana Food Safety Network, US Fire Marshall, Conference for Food Protection.
- The education provided by the licensed Sanitarians in Louisiana offer both the assurance of a safe food supply as well as knowledgeable Sanitarians, establishment owners/workers.